



December 4, 2019

Administrator Steve Dickson  
Federal Aviation Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Dickson,

**We are writing to share our priorities for implementation of the Subtitle D—Airport Noise and Environmental Streamlining section of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2018.** We look forward to your swift and successful completion of these provisions.

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac) is the 8th busiest airport in the country in terms of passenger volumes and one of the fastest growing – increasing from approximately 31 million travelers served in 2010 to almost 50 million last year. The airport plays a vital role in the region’s ongoing economic vitality, but this growth is straining the capacity of our airport and having significant impacts on our communities. For this reason, the Port of Seattle (which owns and operates Sea-Tac) and the six cities immediately surrounding the airport have identified federal policies, regulations and programs we believe are essential to help address local community concerns.

In particular, we have looked at the 2018 FAA Reauthorization Act’s noise provisions as a way to substantively move forward on noise abatement and mitigation. As existing law with definitive deadlines for action, these items provide the most near-term opportunities for progress. **While all of the Subtitle D noise provisions are important, we have identified three top priorities – 1) the provisions related to evaluation of the 65 DNL noise standard (sections 173, 187 and 188), 2) the study of the impact of overflight noise on human health (section 189), and 3) the proposed environmental mitigation pilot program (section 190).**

The timely and effective execution of these provisions are well aligned with community concerns and have the potential for substantive benefit to our region. More specifically:

1. In terms of the 65 DNL, we know that the FAA has completed its comprehensive and detailed survey of noise annoyance levels. We request that you make available the results of this survey

as soon as possible. We are similarly interested in your responses to the FAA bill provisions related to alternative metrics and revised land use compatibility guidelines. We request the release of these guidelines as soon as possible as well. We are hopeful that the combined findings of these studies will provide improved noise mitigation best practices to address the noise impacts affecting our communities.

2. As one of the metropolitan areas called out in the legislation for focus, we are obviously particularly interested in the scope, methodology and findings of the study of health and economic impacts of overflight noise. We want to ensure that results of the study align as closely as possible to the Congressional intent behind this FAA bill provision. In addition to urging swift action on this provision, we would like to be engaged with the FAA and the research university carrying out this work throughout the process.
3. Finally, our region is known for both its innovation and commitment to sustainability, and so we are very excited about the potential for a pilot program that would allow us to experiment with new approaches to reducing or mitigating aviation impacts on noise, air quality, or water quality. We certainly intend to apply for this funding, but also offer our willingness to provide input to the design and structure of the grant program.

There is one additional topic we would like to pursue further with your staff. We are very interested in discussing whether residential buildings that have received FAA and airport funded noise insulation packages might be eligible for secondary investment. We appreciate restrictions on multiple grants for the same projects, but believe that there are situations in which the insulation has “failed” which would necessitate and justify additional investment. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss this issue with you.

We will be in touch with your staff on next steps. In the meantime, do not hesitate to contact Eric Schinfeld, Senior Manager of Federal Government Relations for the Port of Seattle, at 206.787.5031 or [schinfeld.e@portseattle.org](mailto:schinfeld.e@portseattle.org). We deeply appreciate your partnership in ensuring that aviation is as clean, quiet and environmentally sustainable as possible.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Stephanie Bowman  
President  
Port of Seattle Commission



Mayor Jim Ferrell  
City of Federal Way



Mayor Matt Pina  
City of Des Moines



Mayor Jonathan Chicquette  
City of Normandy Park



Mayor Allan Ekberg  
City of Tukwila



Brian J. Wilson  
City Manager  
City of Burien



Carl Cole  
City Manager  
City of SeaTac

CC:  
Kevin Welsh, Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington Congressional Delegation